

HISTORIC DENVER, INC.

ENTERPRISE HILL

HISTORIC DISTRICT



HOMEOWNERS' ASSOCIATION



Queen Anne Inn

a bed and breakfast

A SELF GUIDED TOUR TO THE CLEMENTS HISTORIC DISTRICT

Original History

"... far off into the country ... the dwellings did look forlorn and lonesome standing way out there ..."

So wrote Jerome Smiley describing the early development of the area first known as the Clements Addition and now variously called the Clements, Centennial Hill or Enterprise Hill Historic District.

Originally platted by Alfred H. Clements in 1864, the claim was on a bluff East of Denver's original settlements, Auraria and St. Charles, and just north of the future site of the Brown Palace Hotel where Henry C. Brown laid claim and built his frame house as evidence of his homestead. It is reasonable to describe the developing Clements community as Denver's first "suburb".

Clements soon built his own frame home and through the years, sold off parcels to others. In 1877, he filed bankruptcy, showing liabilities of \$23,000, and no assets. However, surely one of the tough Colorado Pioneers for which Enterprise Hill was named, despite that upset, by 1881 he had become one of the incorporators of the Loveland Pass Mining and Railroad Tunnel Company and by later that year was the Superintendent on the construction of the Loveland Tunnel.

Other enterprising land speculators investing in the Clements Addition in the late 1860's included Moses Hallett, David Moffat, the Joslin Brothers, Samuel Curtis, Charles Kountze, and Joseph Cofield, some of the most important names in Denver history, many of which are still commemorated today in street and building names.

The Historic District, which is but a small part of the original large Clements Addition to the City of Denver, is marked by a pleasing uniformity of scale and style of the structures which comprise it. All the structures are two to three stories high with similar setbacks from the street. Nearly all have gabled roofs, very steep and shingled. There is a delightful potpourri of individual styles, but all are some type of Victorian in character, many quite rare. For example, the Pierce House (see III below) boasts one of Denver's most revered architects, Edbrooke, and may very well be one of the earliest surviving structures by this genius. The St. Andrew's Church (#9 below) by Cram is the only surviving structure of that particular architect in all of Colorado. A "two holer" outhouse, a barn, an early assay house and an early carriage house also all still exist intact. As a result, the architecture is as important as the actual history.

The architecture, setting and relationships of the houses in the District are peculiarly middle class. They are an accurate mirror of the people who built them, lived here, and then departed. The streets are platted on the original Denver Diagonal, conforming to the angles of the two rivers' intersection instead of the compass points.

It may be an enclave now surrounded by a hospital, parking lots and an urban renewal area, but it still retains its magnificent view of the mountains, a stunning vision of cityscape, beautiful landscaping and its internal integrity as a viable, truly residential neighborhood, albeit a small one.

That it survived at all is a minor miracle. The District's early good years peaked shortly after the turn of the century. For the next seventy years or so, most of the single family homes were converted to tenements in varying stages of disrepair for transients and alcoholics. Fortunately, this began to change in the mid-seventies when new residents, urban pioneers in one sense, began to acquire the properties and save them from demolition which was the fate of most of the surrounding area. Today, the area is a delight, a quiet, tree lined, residential oasis literally in the shadow of the high-rises.

The renovations have been spectacular. Almost every building in the District has been extensively photographed. Many have been featured in various publications as diverse as Elle, Sunset, Bridal Guide, New York Times, Chief Executive, Home, New Woman, Contemporary, Empire, Denver, Inc., Colorado Homes & Lifestyles, Westword, San Francisco Examiner, City Edition, and even Playboy to name just a few, not to mention been the focus of numerous TV and radio stories. You can see for yourself, at least as to the exteriors, as to why the neighborhood has been so popular with reporters and editors.

The Individual Buildings

1. 2147 TREMONT/PIERCE HOUSE (a/k/a QUEEN ANNE INN) - 1879 Queen Anne style by Frank Edbrooke, Denver's most famous architect who also did the Brown Palace, Masonic Temple and Denver Buildings. The first owner was Edwin W. Pierce, brother of Augusta Tabor and brother-in-law and personal secretary to then Lt. Governor Horace Tabor, one of Colorado's most colorful individuals. The double brackets under the eaves and almost all the multi-patterned side shingling are original and date back to the early construction. Also note the unusual and surprisingly un-ornamented front facade. The house is now a luxury bed and breakfast accommodation.

2. 2137 TREMONT/TRUFANT HOUSE - 1882 Dutch Colonial style. Owner number one was William B. Trufant, Civil War Gunboat Captain and later Superintendent of Union Depot for 15 years. Pay particular attention to the gambrel roof with the original sheet metal. Also observe the decorative brickwork.

3. 2135 TREMONT/LOWTHIAN HOUSE - 1883 Italianate style. First occupant was Thomas Lowthian, a mining investor. The small building in the rear originally was an assay house. An oddity is the overlapping rooflines. Originally, the chimney of the adjacent Trufant House (#2) was so close it curved to avoid the overlapping roofline, but it has since been removed.

4. 2127 TREMONT/ROBERTS HOUSE I - 1883 Italianate style. First home on the block of DeWitt C. Roberts while he was principal of Broadway and later Elbert Schools. Still later, he was a mining and land speculator owning the Quito Mine in Idaho Springs. (See also /120 below.)

5. 2121 TREMONT/LOPER HOUSE - 1880 Farm style by Nichols and Cannan, designers of the Denver City Hall and David Moffat's luxury townhouses - LaVeta Place. Edward J. Loper, known as the Vinegar King, was the first buyer. His vinegar label was ultimately sold to the well known Kuner Company still in existence today. Of interest is the extremely thick walls of the house and the decorative ironwork on the roof peak. The latter was rescued from the bottom of the H. H. Thomas House outhouse (/110 below) and restored.

6. 401 to 415 21ST STREET/THE KINGSTON (a/k/a Miller Building) - 1890 basically Queen Anne style six unit row-house. It was built by Arthur S. Miller, a real estate developer known as Apartment House Miller, whose family first came to America in 1630. Like Commodore Trufant, Mr. Miller also fought in the Navy during the Civil War. The design is an undulating combination of contrasting architectural elements with a slate roof mansardic, dormer windows and twin finials. Five of the six units have stunning multilevel, fountained, trellised, landscape architect designed gardens and many have roof decks as well.

7. 2062 GLENARM/BEST HOUSE - 1874 Nee-colonial style. First owned by Captain John D. Best, son of a prominent New England family. He was a sea captain before coming to Denver where he set up a large wholesale grocery and grain operation.

8. 2050 and 2052 GLENARM/DOST AL HOUSES - I 906 Queen Anne style by W. T. Childs for John R. Dostal. These two houses are nearly identical, the only visual differences being the placement of the one story bay window so that each window faces the other house. The roof is gabled with a demi-lune attic window. They were once used as parish houses for St. Andrew's Church.

9. 2015 GLENARM/ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH AND PARSONAGE - 1909 Late Gothic Revival style, the only Colorado work of the great American architect, Ralph Adams Cram, and the youngest structure in the Historic District. It was commissioned as a memorial for the wife of A. Dupont Parke and is used today for Episcopalian High Services. The most striking feature is the dominant Centre-pointed Gothic leaded glass window. There is no bell tower (the bell is on a platform in the back), but efforts are under way to raise money for one.

10. 2104 GLENARM/H. H. THOMAS HOUSE (a/k/a SHROCK HOUSE AND McCLURE HOUSE)

1883 Quayle Victorian by prominent early Denver architect, William Quayle, for Hugh H. Thomas, a furniture dealer. The style is obviously High Victorian, but uniquely Quayle's interpretation. The property was later sold to John and Martha Shrock, two of the earliest Denver Pioneers. A builder by trade, Mr. Schrock did most of the brick and stone work on the Tabor Grand Opera House and the D&F Store. His daughter and son-in-law, Louis C. McClure inherited it. McClure was known as Denver's most important early photographer. Although the house is mostly brick, the foundation is lava stone and there are several string courses of yellow sandstone. Similar sandstone, beveled and carved with floral medallions, form the lintels above the doors and windows. Note the absence of exposed gutters and the Eastlake front porch with a remarkable stained glass entry. Out back is the original barn and the proverbial brick outhouse making the house a rare and comparatively complete example of what life was like in early Denver.

11. 2112 GLENARM/MACFARLAN HOUSE (a/k/a WOODS HOUSE) - 1883 mostly Italianate style in design with an ornamental iron fence and a rear carriage house. The pitch of the roof is slightly greater than customary for Italianate, but its tall simplistic facade with a two story front porch have the essence of the Italianate form. Although built for Dr. John MacFarlan, the Woods family is more closely associated with the house. The fourth generation of Woods is still living in this house and much of the interior is as it was a century ago.

12. 2115 GLENARM/SCHROTER HOUSE - 1873. This was built for George Schroter, a commercial flour and grain merchant and a school board member who suggested the name for Ebert's School (#18 below). Although it looks abandoned, this property, the two boarded up Dostal Houses (#8), the closed drugstore at 20th and Logan and the un-restored forlorn black glass storefront at 20th and Lincoln are all controlled by Denver Burglar Company and used for storage. It is unfortunate that these are still un-restored, but perhaps someday at least the ones in the Historic District will be sold as single family homes and bought by someone interested in restoring the irreplaceable heritage they represent.

13. 2120 GLENARM/W. C. THOMAS HOUSE - 1888 Queen Anne style. Will C. Thomas was the first owner. His opera singer wife, Callie Brinker, starred in the Central City Opera. She was the daughter of the headmaster of the Brinker School (located in the infamous Navarre Building) and he was the son of H. H. Thomas who lived two doors away (/110). In the 1930's, a misguided city official ordered the removal of the carved gargoyles on the house. Like the Morey House (#14) next door, there is an oval attic window.

14. 2126 GLENARM/MOREY HOUSE - 1888 Queen Anne Style. Built for Chester S. Morey. He was one of the area's most successful residents. He founded Great Western Sugar Company and Manual Training High School. Morey Junior High was named in his honor. Projecting from the front of the house is a small porch once circum-fenced by iron cresting. There is still a horse rein ring in the flagstone next to the street. A full size swimming pool now takes up most of the back yard.

15. 2146 GLENARM/DRINKWATER HOUSE - 1885. John H. and Emma I. Drinkwater were the first owners. Mr. Drinkwater was a stockbroker and later a real estate broker. Officing in the Opera House Block, he was one of the most substantial businessmen in the City and the moving spirit in the Chamber of Commerce of the time.

16. 2148 GLENARM PLACE/HUDSON HOUSE - Date unknown Mission style with curvilinear gable. This house is known locally as "The Alamo" for its remote resemblance to its namesake.

17. 2201-2217 GLENARM/CLEMENTS ROWHOUSES - 1884 Italianate style, sometimes called San Francisco Bayfronts. With the structural emphasis on the vertical line, the five units are horizontally unified by a heavy cornice. Lintels over the doors and windows show Neo-Grecian style carvings.

18. 400 BLOCK OF 22ND STREET/EBERT'S SCHOOL. Named for F. J. Ebert, the man instrumental in getting rail service to Denver.

19. 2161 TREMONT/HALL HOUSE - 1871 Stick style. This is the oldest house in the District built for Lucius E. Hall who was the entire West's representative for Singer Sewing Machine. The steep pitch roof is flattened on the top indicating a "widow's walk" was once there and at one time a large, elaborate porch existed in front. He also had the 2 1/2 story building built immediately behind.

20. 2151 TREMONT/ROBERTS HOUSE I I - 1886 Queen Anne style by Morris Stuckert. This was the second home on the block of DeWitt Roberts, co-founder of the town of Ordway, father of a name partner in one of Denver's largest law firms and grandfather of a chairman of the United Banks. Of particular interest is the round turret, relatively rare for Denver, and the decorative trefoil border supporting the eave of the porch. The stained glass on the second floor is a recent addition.

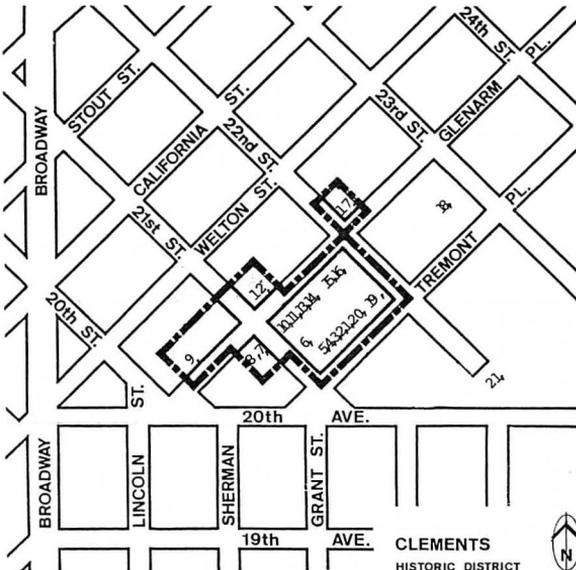
21. 22ND STREET AND 20TH AVENUE/BENEDICT FOUNTAIN. The fountain is named for Jacques Benedict, a famed Denver architect responsible for the Boathouse in Washington Park, Holy Ghost Church and the Littleton Town Hall and Library among others. The Fountain is not original, but it is an exact copy of the original. The principal difference is that instead of terra cotta, this is Carerra Marble carved in Italy.

Current History

The foregoing basically only details the original owners. Since then, there have been artists, lawyers, a judge, a mayor, bankers, brokers, builders, buyers, merchants, an astronaut candidate, a ballerina, a cinematographer with two Academy Award nominations, a founder of the Denver Club, principals, paralegals, waiters, housewives, monks, nuns and many other owners and occupants, more than can be named. This, by the way, is apparently the only historic district in the country that ever had both a monastery and a convent (different religions) within its boundaries.

All were important to how the neighborhood has turned out and no one worked alone, but some deserve special recognition for their extra efforts in the transformation - First and foremost BILL and KAY JAMES for their vision (They were the first to lead the fight for restoration back in 1973, when it was all scheduled for demolition. What you see today could not have been done without them.), DON PARKER for the Park (The Park used to be largely a parking lot.), TED and LORI FREEDMAN for the trees in the Park and the antique street lights lining the District (He arm wrestled Aspen for them. They originally lit Walsenburg.), JOHN and MARY COFFEY for the reproduction street lights lining the Park, JUDY RYAN for the restoration of the Fountain, FATHER NEAR for finding the money to renew St. Andrews, TOM ARMSTRONG and BILL BARLOW for their architectural research, GEORGEANNE KANE for the flowering Toba Hawthornes in the Tremont parking strip, AL and ESTHER FIJARDO for their blockading of the parking lot barons by refusing to sell out and their never failing public hearing appearances, MARY STRANDBURG for her swimming pool which ties us together, CHUCK and ANN HILLESTAD for their general tilting at windmills and other battles with bureaucrats, and all the current residents who continue to devote so much attention to making the Clements Historic District a great place to be. 5/1/88

WELCOME TO CLEMENTS! - TELL YOUR FRIENDS.



(Illustrations by Jane Hansen and Carrie Ierew)

(Text by Charles Hillestad, Bill James and Linda Tegbneier)